

## **REMARKS**

Applicants thank the Examiner for the Examiner's consideration of the present application. Applicants have studied the Office Action and cited references thoroughly. In the present response, claims 1-10 are amended. Claims 11-22 are added. Claims 1-22 are pending, and no new matter is added.

### **Amendments to the Specification**

Applicant have amended the specification to clarify the scope of the invention. Applicants assert that this amendment is in no way intended to change the scope of the present application.

### **Claim Objections**

The Office Action rejected claims 1-10 due to various informalities citing typographical errors and permissive language found in the claims. Applicants have amended claims 1-10 to correct the cited typographical error, to remove the "can be" and "being possible" permissive language originally recited in the claims, and to clarify the claims. Applicants assert that these claim amendments are not intended to alter the originally intended scope of the claims, and respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the claim objections.

### **Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

The Office Action rejected claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Meyerhoefer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,637,011). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants assert that Meyerhoefer et al. does not disclose every element of independent claim 1, and therefore does not provide a basis for a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Applicants note that independent claim 1 requires a device for guarding access for at least two distributor modules each formed with a system side and a subscriber side row of insulation displacement contacts, and at least one locking device guarding access to the system side and the subscriber side, wherein the subscriber side of at least one distributor module is unlockable independent of the other distributor modules. Applicants note that Meyerhoefer et al. does not teach each of these elements.

Applicants cannot determine what portions of Meyerhoefer et al. the Office Action considers to disclose the various elements of the claims. The Office Action does not point out

what is considered a distribution module, a system side, or a row of insulation displacement connectors. Applicants assert that each single connection pair (as seen in FIG. 4 of Meyerhoefer et al.) cannot be a distributor module. This is because a distributor module, as explicitly indicated in claim 1 of the present application, requires a row of insulation displacement connectors. Applicants must assume that the Examiner means that the left and right sides of the box shown in FIG. 4 of Meyerhoefer et al. as a whole represents a row of contacts. In that case, Meyerhoefer does not disclose a device for guarding access to at least two distributor modules, because only one device is shown. So, Meyerhoefer et al. either fails to disclose two distributor modules, or fails to disclose a row of contacts. Regardless, Meyerhoefer et al. cannot anticipate claim 1.

For at least this reason, Meyerhoefer et al. does not anticipate claim 1. Claims 2-10 depend from independent claim 1, and inherit all of the limitations therefrom. Claims 2-10 are therefore allowable as well.

Applicants further note that newly added claims 11-22 include at least the features of claim 1 which distinguish claims 1-10 from Meyerhoefer et al. Applicants therefore assert the allowability of the newly added claims as well.

### **Conclusion**

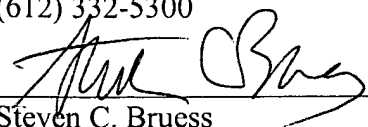
In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.



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Respectfully submitted,

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